

FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANS. (1827- )

Orders No. 14, The Adjutant General's Office, March 7, 1827, directed the establishment of a post on the Missouri River near the mouth of the Little Platte River to protect caravans on the Santa Fe trail. The post was accordingly established about May 8, 1827, by Companies B, D, E, and F of the 3rd Infantry, commanded by Col. Henry Leavenworth. It was designated Cantonment Leavenworth by Orders No. 56, The Adjutant General's Office, November 8, 1827. The post has since been in continuous military occupation. Orders No. 11, Headquarters of the Army, February 8, 1832, changed the name of Cantonment Leavenworth to Fort Leavenworth. Fort Leavenworth was the base for many exploring expeditions to the West. Among these were Maj. Bennet Riley's expedition along the Santa Fe trail in 1829. In 1835, Col. Henry Dodge led an expedition to the Rocky Mountains by way of the Platte River and the Oregon trail, returning by way of the Arkansas River and the Santa Fe trail. In 1845 Col. Stephen Watts Kearney led an expedition along the same general route, going as far as South Pass. In 1839 Col. Kearney led an expedition to the Cherokee Nation, which was composed of the largest mounted force of Regulars that had ever been assembled by the United States. On June 26, 1846, Col. Kearney left Fort Leavenworth at the head of the Army of the West on an expedition to Santa Fe, which was surrendered by the Mexican authorities, August 18, 1846. Col. Kearney then marched to California with part of his command, leaving Col. Alexander W. Doniphan in command. When he had been reinforced, Col. Doniphan left Col. Sterling Price in command at Santa Fe, and marched to Chihuahua, Mexico, by way of El Paso del Norte, defeating two Mexican armies on the way. Col. Doniphan and his men then joined the army of Maj. Gen. Zachary Taylor at Saltillo. The town of Fort Leavenworth was the first capital of the Territory of Kansas, which was set up in 1854. During the Civil War, the post was twice threatened by Confederates and was a major base of operations in the West. Because of its central location and large reservation, Fort Leavenworth has been the site of many other activities than those of the post itself. Before the establishment of the Territory of Kansas it was usually the site of an Indian Agency or subagency. As the frontier advanced it became a major supply base, particularly during the period of the Mexican and Civil Wars. It was also a favored site for military service schools. The following are some of the establishments that have been located at Fort Leavenworth:

( The Ordnance Arsenal (1860-74) )

The Ordnance Arsenal was established in accordance with an order of the Secretary of War dated May 21, 1860. It was discontinued by General Orders No. 8, The Adjutant General's Office, February 2, 1874.

( Quartermaster Clothing Depot (1874-78) )

General Orders No. 124, The Adjutant General's Office, November 14,